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In the American soldier's email home, rhetorical devices flowed throughout his missive to completely and accurately depict his plights and to ease the curious minds of those at home. Through the use of pathos, or as I like to refer to them as, pitty points, the soldier goes through some routines and situations that he frequents.

The email is written in second person making it more informal and more credible. By using pronouns such as "we" and "you", he brings his family along for the ride. He establishes his comfortable-manner that would be evident with a family by using his informal diction (i.e. OK, 24, really freakin' cold). Though the pathos appeal is flowing throughout, it bubbles up and over in the hyperbole in lines 26-27 ("I went back to the tent and felt like either crying or lighting myself on fire to remove the filth.") I needn't explain how this is a hyperbole, since self-ignition would bring pain rather than sterilization. This is apparent pathos because he is using self-injury as a threat for something, thus begging for sympathy. The soldier also keeps with his soldier status by employing the use of some army jargon, such as "0400" and "personal effects".

This author is not very subtle about his conditions and apparent hate for his life. The entire email reeks of "fml", pardon the expression. His allusions to first-world products and names (i.e. vacuums, Wal-Mart, driveway, kennel o' pugs) help demonstrate what he is going through, using things that a non-soldier would understand. Surprise, I found more pathos.

Utilizing another rhetorical device, the soldier starts with a hint of exordium. Instead of the fourth grader that starts his paper with "Hi, my name is Johnny and I'm going to tell you about (insert topic here)", he says, "I know a number of you have been curious about what it's like over here so we are going to take a small mental voyage." He starts off with no greeting or cliché but rather a bold statement showing his family what they were about to get themselves into. From thereon, he switches to partition to continue with his matter-of-fact style. By typing "Time for hygiene" (19) and "I don't even feel like talking about the latrine experience" (26-27), he is dividing the email and stating what will be found in the lines to come.

Without further ado, I shall leave you with some textual examples of the pathos that lies throughout begging for sympathy because of its appeal to the emotion of the proud Mama and Papa. "Now roll in [the vacuum's dust] until it's in your eyes, nose, ears, hair and ... well, you get the picture" (3-4). "You know it's perfect when you slap your chest and cough from the dust cloud you kicked up. And so, there is no escape, trust me. You just get used to it" (5-7).

Rhetorical devices help shape a piece of literature into something relatable for those who read it. Utilizing the different appeals, in this case pathos, a connection is made between the author and the audience, not just because it's Mama's little boy, but because the reader can realize that within the first three lines, the writer is in a depiction of hell. The informal tone brings it home so the reader feels like it is meant for them, not for something else, like say.... an AP test.... This email is all the evidence and reference I need to make the informed decision to never join the army. Congrats, soldier, your pathos appeal worked. Sympathy granted.